

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LENDING 01807 090909Z

21

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 080812Z NOV 76

FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2778

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L L E N I N G R A D 1 8 0 7

EXDIS

EO 11652GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, PINT, SREF, CVIS, OGEN

SUBJ: LENINGRAD JEWISH EMIGRATION SCENE (OCTOBER)

REF: LENINGRAD 1409, 1540, 1586, 1587, 1588

1. SUMMARY. KGB HAS DROPPED FORMAL LEGAL PROCEEDINGS IN THE SHESTAKOVSKIY-SVERDLIN CASE ACCORDING TO LOCAL REFUSENIKS. SAME SOURCES SENSE A QUICKENING IN THE FLOW OF JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM LENINGRAD, ALTHOUGH NO REFUSENIKS HAVE RECEIVED EXIT PERMISSION IN MORE THAN A MONTH. END SUMMARY.

2. LENINGRAD REFUSENIK SHESTAKOVSKIY, WHO SUFFERED SERIOUS INJURIES IN A RECENT CONFRONTATION IN HIS APARTMENT WITH A GROUP OF REFUSENIKS LED BY SVERDLIN, TOLD CONSOFF AUTHORITIES HAVE DROPPED JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST HIS ALLEGED ASSAILANTS. SHESTAKOVSKIY AND OTHER SOURCES IN WHOSE APARTMENT CHANCE MEETING BETWEEN CONSOFF AND SHESTAKOVSKIY TOOK PLACE FEEL KGB DECIDED NOT TO PROSECUTE SO AS NOT TO HELP CLEAR UP THE MATTER. AUTHORITIES ARE FELT TO HOPE THAT IF THEY LEAVE THE MATTER ALONE IT WILL DEVELOP EVEN FURTHER TO THE DISCOMFITURE OF THE REFUSENIK COMMUNITY.

3. SHESTAKOVSKIY THINKS THAT HAD THE ASSAULT TAKEN PLACE AMONG ORDINARY CITIZENS SOMEONE WOULD HAVE GONE TO JAIL FOR UP TO THREE YEARS. FOR HIS PART, HOWEVER, SHESTAKOVSKIY ASSERTS HE WILL REFUSE TO RISE TO THE BAIT SO AS NOT TO BRING FURTHER HARM TO THE REFUSENIK COMMUNITY. HE WILL QTE NOT APPEAL END QTE AUTHORITIES' CONFIDENTIAL

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DECISION NOT TO PROSECUTE. HE ADMITS SOME BITTERNESS THAT HIS

ASSAILANTS WILL NOT BE PROSECUTED AND GRANTS THERE COULD BE FURTHER TROUBLE FROM THE OTHER SIDE, BUT HE DID NOT SEEM TO CONSIDER THIS LATTER PROSPECT A SERIOUS POSSIBILITY.

4. THUS HOPEFULLY THE AFFAIR MAY HAVE ENDED WITH MINIMAL DAMAGE TO THE REFUSENIKS' CAUSE ALTHOUGH SHESTAKOVSKIY STILL BEARS THE PHYSICAL--AND PROBABLY PSYCHOLOGICAL--MARKS OF THE ENCOUNTER. A LARGE, RAISED SCAR RUNS DIAGONALLY ACROSS HIS RIGHT PALM, AND HE STILL WEARS A BANDAGE ON THE MIDDLE FINGER OF HIS RIGHT HAND. BOTH A NERVE AND A TENDON IN HIS RIGHT HAND WERE DAMAGED WITH THE RESULT THAT HE NOW HAS NO FEELING IN A LARGE PART OF HIS HAND AND NO USE OF THE MIDDLE FINGER. HE WILL SOON UNDERGO A MEDICAL CONSULTATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER SOVIET DOCTORS CONSIDER--AS DID A VISITING AMERICAN DOCTOR--A FURTHER OPERATION NECESSARY.

5. SOURCES REPORT A QUICKENING OF JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM LENINGRAD. THE OVIR OFFICES ARE REPORTEDLY VERY BUSY THESE DAYS AND MOST WHO APPLY TO EMIGRATE RECEIVE PERMISSION. SOURCES COMMENT IT ALMOST SEEMS ACCORDING TO PLAN. A NOTEWORTHY FEATURE OF THIS DEVELOPMENT IS THAT DECISIONS ARE HANDED DOWN VERY QUICKLY NOW; OFTEN PEOPLE DO NOT EVEN HAVE TO WAIT A MONTH AFTER FILING THEIR DOCUMENTS WHEREAS PREVIOUSLY A WAIT OF TWO MONTHS IS REPORTED NOT HAVE BEEN UNCOMMON. REFUSENIKS HAVE NOT SHARED IN THIS GOOD LUCK; NO REFUSENIKS HAVE BEEN GIVEN PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE SINCE SEPTEMBER WHEN RAINUS AND EPSHTEIN WERE ALLOWED TO LEAVE. IN FACT, THERE HAS BEEN ONE SIGNIFICANT REFUSAL RECENTLY. LONG-TIME REFUSENIK FELIX ARONOVICH RECEIVED HIS FOURTH REFUSAL ON OCTOBER 16 ONLY TWO WEEKS AFTER FILING HIS APPLICATION.

6. POST CANNOT AT PRESENT DETERMINE WHETHER IN FACT THE TEMPO OF JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM LENINGRAD HAS PICKED UP OVER THE PAST MONTH OR SO. PERHAPS EMBASSY MOSCOW CAN OBTAIN A CITY-BY-CITY BREAKDOWN OF ENTRY VISAS GRANTED IN MOSCOW OVER THE PAST MONTH OR TWO. THE SITUATION WITHIN THE REFUSENIK COMMUNITY AT ANY RATE MAY BECOME CLEARER IN THE NEAR FUTURE WHEN LOCAL REFUSENIKS COMPLETE A CENSUS OF THE LENINGRAD REFUSENIKS WHICH THEY ARE NOW CARRYING OUT. THEY SAY THEY HAVE LOST TRACK OF SOME OF THEIR COLLEAGUES AND WITH TO VERIFY AND UPDATE THEIR LISTS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, JEWS, HARASSMENT, DISSIDENT FACTIONS, TRIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LENING01807
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760417-0029
From: LENINGRAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761171/aaaacjnd.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 LENINGRAD 1409
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LENINGRAD JEWISH EMIGRATION SCENE (OCTOBER)
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SREF, CVIS, OGEN, UR, (SHESTAKOVSKIY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006